

**REMARKS**

A total of 16 claims remain in the present application. The foregoing amendments are presented in response to the First Action mailed March 29, 2006, wherefore reconsideration of this application is requested.

By way of the above-noted amendments, independent claim 1 has been amended to more precisely define features of the present invention. Independent claims 11 and 16 have been cancelled in favour of new claim 22, which is consistent with amended claim 1. Claims 2-3, 5-10, 12, 15 and 17-20 have been amended, and claims 4, 13-14 and 21 cancelled to reflect the above-noted amendment of claim 1, cancellation of claims 11 and 16 and introduction of new claim 22. In preparing the above-noted amendments, careful attention was paid to ensure that no new subject matter has been introduced.

Referring now to the text of the Office Action:

- claims 1-6, 9, 11-14, 16-17, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the teaching of United States Patent No. 6,728,646 (Howell et al.); and
- claims 7-8, 10, 15, 18, 20 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the teaching of Howell et al in view of United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0072868 (Bartone et al.).

The Examiner's claim rejections are believed to be traversed by way of the foregoing amendments and further in view of following discussion.

United States Patent No. 6,728,646 (Howell et al) teaches an energy information system designed to monitor power consumption on individual power distribution circuits, and relay this information to a central site. United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0072868 (Bartone et al.) teaches a similar system, in which energy consumption at each of the monitored sites can also be controlled to enable aggregate control over the power consumption. However, neither reference teaches or fairly suggests methods or systems in which power consumption is monitored at a plurality of sites, and then analyzed to "compute aggregate power consumption data of a predetermined set of two or more of

the plurality of power consumer sites”, as required by the present invention. More particularly, neither Howell et al. nor Bartone et al. teach or fairly suggest computing aggregate power consumption data using the respective data of some, but not necessarily all, of the consumer sites being monitored.

For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that the presently claimed invention is clearly distinguishable over the teachings of the known prior art, taken alone or in any combination. Thus, it is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance, and early action in that respect is courteously solicited.

If any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this response, such extension is hereby respectfully requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 which are not enclosed herewith, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-5113.

Respectfully submitted,

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